

June 2022

Report from the Capacity Building Committee

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Updates on the committee's various initiatives:

I. Regional Resource Centres

- A. Before issuing a Request for Proposals to establish another Regional Resource Centre, the Capacity Building Committee agreed at its February meeting that focus group interviews with the existing RRCs would be helpful as we move forward.

Angie Yuen, Zul Hatta, Felicia Tuggle and I each interviewed the leadership of the four regional resource centres: China (Darla), Oceana (Angie), Nordic Baltic (Felicia), and East Africa (Zul). We were guided by the following questions:

1. What were the original motivations for applying to establish an RRC in your region? How far do you think the present operation of the RRC is able to reach your intended goals?
2. What are the benefits that you have seen in being named an RRC?
3. What obstacles have you encountered?
4. In addition to the initial seed money provided by IASSW, how did you manage to sustain the RRC with your own resources? How do you intend to make the RRC sustainable in the long run?
5. Have you collaborated with other RRCs? (Would you be willing to?)
 - a. If an RRC has collaborated with another RRC it might be good for us to know what the collaboration entailed and how it came about. If the RRC has not collaborated it might be good to know if there are any realities that have made collaboration challenging.
6. What support might IASSW provide in areas such as tenure/promotion recommendations, making connections, supporting them when they look for local and regional funding? How might we make the work of the RRC more visible?
7. Do you have any suggestions on the criteria to be used for establishing new RRC? Do they think that our present criteria are appropriate?

The interviews were extraordinarily helpful and insightful and revealed the following broad themes:

- ➔ Each of the RRCs have established a strong presence in their region and activities aimed at bringing together the education, research and practice communities have been quite successful.
- ➔ Institutional support of the RRCs has been critical for sustainability (and this varies among the four and over time).
- ➔ There is optimism about their ability to secure additional funding through grants and/or contracts.
- ➔ The RRCs would like to have more opportunities to connect and collaborate with each other.
- ➔ The Centre leaders would like IASSW to help raise the profile of the Centres.
- ➔ All believed that the current eligibility criteria for application is correct.

B. IASSW now has four Regional Resource Centres (RRC): China, Oceania, Nordic Baltic, East Africa

1. The China Social Work Research Centre, a collaboration between Peking and Hong Kong Polytechnic Universities, established in 2016, is the longest-serving and most established of the IASSW RRCs. The Centre worked with the IASSW Capacity Building committee and leadership of the Vietnam Association for Social Work Education to offer a 2-day workshop for Vietnamese Social Work Educators in May 2022. The event focused on curriculum development and featured colleagues from China, Japan, Singapore, Vietnam and the United States.

The China Centre is providing support for the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding between IASSW and the Vietnam Association for Vocational Education and Social Work Profession (VAVETSOW).

2. The Regional Resource Centre of Oceania, a collaboration between Massey University, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, The University of Wollongong, The University of the South Pacific, and Whitireia New Zealand, was established in 2017.
3. The Nordic Baltic Regional Resource Centre was established in Fall 2019. This RRC engages social work educators and practitioners in the countries of North Western Europe (Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, German, and Russia), as well as throughout the broader Baltic and Nordic regions, including Kauno Technologijos Universitetas (Lithuania), Mykolas Romeris University (Lithuania), Oslo Metropolitan University (Norway), Jagiellonian

University (Poland), Malmö University (Sweden). The universities involved include the State University St Petersburg (Russia), Trondheim University (Norway), University of Iceland (Iceland), Vilnius University (Lithuania), University of Latvia (Latvia), Vytautas Magnus University, (Lithuania), Gothenburg University (Sweden), Tallinn University (Estonia), University of Tartu (Estonia), Nordic Association of Social Workers, Talenta (Finland), FORSA, and the DGSA (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziale Arbeit: German Association of Social Work).

4. The East Africa Centre was launched approximately one year ago, led by the Makerere University Department of Social Work and Social Administration and aims to support the growth of the social work profession in the surrounding areas of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda.

II. Capacity Building Workshops

As stated above, the Capacity Building Committee worked with an international group of colleagues to offer a two-day workshop for social work educators in Vietnam. As is our custom, the design and focus of the workshop was in response to the request offered by the leadership in Vietnam. It was attended by approximately 45 educators; we have heard from our colleagues in Vietnam that it was very well-received.

The June IASSW Board meeting will be a fully hybrid meeting. The Capacity Building Committee is working with our Brazilian host(s) to develop a mini-workshop that will be meaningful to our colleagues in Brazil.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Capacity Building Committee,



Darla Spence Coffey, PhD, MSW
Chair